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RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 5831
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT 3719
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 2202
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 6932
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 0830
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 4291
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM 0519
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INFO RUEHNC/AMEMBASSY NICOSIA 6666

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DEPARTMENT FOR PA, NEA/ARN, INR/IC/CD, INR/S:STHIBEAULT AND
JMCCARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBURGEOIS, DBENZE AND
AFERNANDEZ, IIP/G/NEA-SA RWINCHESTER
WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC
CENTCOM FOR CCPA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [SY](#)

SUBJECT: Damascus Media Reaction: Syria, Hamas, President Bush's
tour, Lebanon, Iraq

1. Summary:

Syrian newspapers highlighted statements by F.M. Walid al-Mo'alleem during the Arab League's ministerial meeting that Syria has reached a "good understanding" with the International Investigation Committee. Papers also highlighted the meeting in Damascus of the Arab Parties Conference and the address to the Conference by Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal, who said that Hamas would combine political work with resistance.

Ezeddin al-Darwish editorialized in Tishreen that Arabs are suffering from the American occupation of Arab territories and its support of Israel and from American labeling of anyone who opposes U.S. policies as undemocratic and terrorist, while those who call Israel a friend are promoted to the rank of zealous democrats and true nationalists and are invited to the White House, a clear reference to the Lebanese politician Walid Jumblat.

End summary.

2. Selected Headlines:

"F.M. Al-Mo'alleem: We have reached a good understanding with the International Investigation Committee and have agreed on the secrecy of the investigations." (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 3/6)
"F.M. Al-Mo'alleem discusses with Mousa preparations for the Arab Summit and the undertaking of joint action: Syria's adherence to national and pan-Arab constants is the reason for the American pressure." (Government-owned Tishreen, 3/6)

"Lebanese National dialogue resumes today on the bases of rapprochement. F.M. Salloukh confirms Arab support for Lebanon." (Government-owned Tishreen, 3/6)

"Jumblat pleads with Washington to exert pressure on Syria." (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 3/7)

"Arab Parties Conference discusses the mechanism to confront the American project. Message to Khartoum summit to stand by Syria." (Government-owned Tishreen, 3/6)

"Mashaal before the Parties' Conference on the success of Hamas: We are combining politics with resistance, and Syria is in the rank of the victors." (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 3/7)

"Primakov: Washington has failed to isolate Hamas" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 3/5)

"Olmert: No Dialogue with Hamas. Our position contradicts that of Moscow." (Government-owned Tishreen, 3/6)

"Amnesty International criticizes the torture of Syrian detainees in Lebanese prison." (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 3/5)

13. Editorial Block Quotes:

"Has Bush Asked: Why?"

Ezzedin al-Darwish, an editorialist in government-owned Tishreen, wrote (3/6): "Massive demonstrations, protests, acts of violence, closure of cities, curfews, deaths and injuries-- all of this takes place wherever President Bush visits and this was clear in his visits to India, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

"It is not confined to this country or that, as everyone is harmed by the Bush Administration policies and positions that are dedicated to the service of international Zionism and to fight Arabs and Muslims under the banner of combating terrorism.

"In the Arab region the Bush Administration wants to occupy, infringe on national sovereignty, kill, directly or through Israel, and instigate sectarianism, and if anyone says no, then he is labeled a terrorist or undemocratic, and he should be

fought politically, economically and even militarily....

"It is enough that someone Walid Jumblat say that Israel is not an enemy and the national resistance is an enemy, for the gates of the White House and the State Department to open before him and for him to be labeled a traditional democrat and a first

class nationalist.

"The Arabs are truly suffering from the Bush Administration's policies; they are suffering direct American occupation, unlimited support for the Israeli occupation, interference in the internal affairs of more than one Arab country and deliberate provocations to this country or that, all leading to popular and official anger that is manifested in various forms.

"Did President Bush ask himself, when he toured Asian and Islamic countries recently, what procedures should be taken to improve America's image in the Arab and Islamic worlds?"

Johnson-Casares